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TIPS on Personnel Management



for SUPERVISORS

from the Director of Personnel

Carl B Barnes



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NOTE TO SUPERVISORS:

September 1962

One of the recommendations made at the Personnel Policy Review Meeting in Philadelphia last September would require members of OP's Staff "to appear before groups of Department people, both in the field and in Washington, to exchange with them ideas about the personnel philosophy and policies of the Department"

Since this gets into the area of speechmaking, it seems to have brought about a revival of interest in the subject of Public Speaking.

Some thoughts on the subject are outlined in this "TIPS" Sheet. After you have read them, will you please circulate the sheet to each present and potential public speaker in your office so they may do likewise.

Carl B Barnes
Carl B. Barnes
Director of Personnel

COMMUNICATION VIA THE SPOKEN WORD

Many forms through which to communicate the fruits of its growth are available to the human intellect.

These forms, which have various media of expression, are the Arts, the Sciences, the Written Word, and the Spoken Word.

Since virtually all but the Spoken Word require special talents, it is this form of communication which is most universally shared.

Thomas Mann, the noted author, has said:

"Speech is civilization itself. The word, even the

most contradictory word, preserves contact—it is silence which isolates."

The fast pace at which the world moves today demands quick communication. There is none quicker, more direct, nor more powerful, than the Spoken Word.

We have only to cite the impact on the world of such great speakers of the past and present as Theodore Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and President Kennedy.

Not only has their powerful impact been felt, but

their spoken words remain indelibly imprinted on the minds of everyone.

Few will quickly forget Theodore Roosevelt's

"...Speak softly and carry a big stick."

Winston Churchill's

"I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat."

Franklin Delano Roosevelt's

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

And President Kennedy's

"And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."

GROWING IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

More and more, the ability to use the spoken word is becoming a specified requirement by business executives and government officials in selecting individuals for better and more important jobs.

It isn't enough to be knowledgeable. One must also have the ability to impart this knowledge effectively through the spoken word.

The ability to speak in public is not, in itself, open sesame to success. But it is certainly one of the hallmarks of many successful men or women.

HISTORY OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

Public speaking is not a modern art. It has been practiced since the beginning of man. Through the ages, it has been his most potent weapon.

It was Kipling who said:

"Words are the most powerful drug used by mankind."

For years a fallacy has persisted that public speakers are born that way.

Unfortunately through the centuries man's continual use of public speaking has had no effect on the gene in his heredity pattern which makes him vocal.

Lamentably, Mother Nature has not seen fit to transmute his vocal gene to a public speaking gene.

Public speakers—as George Bernard Shaw has said of kings—are not born. They are made.

Any man or woman with the desire to do so can learn to speak in public. This is a proven fact.

PUBLIC SPEAKING ABILITY

It is true that speaking in public comes easier to some than to others. Some thrive on it—are stimulated by and feed on the presence of an attentive audience. Possibly it was one of these of whom John Milton spoke when he said:

"His words, like so many nimble and airy servitors, trip about him at command."



But there are countless others to whom the mere mention of the words "public speaking" brings on an attack of "butterflies."

No one can account for this disquieting phenomenon. Why these "butterflies" should plague some and not others has long remained an insoluble mystery.

Great brains have orbited man around the earth in outer space and have united nations—oceans apart—in communicating the spoken word via Telstar.

But no great brain has yet come up with a once-and-for-all cure-all for the man subject to "butterflies."

Yet those so afflicted need not despair of ever becoming public speakers.

While a cure-all for "butterflies" has never been discovered, ways have been devised by which they can be controlled.

STEPS NECESSARY TO BECOME A PUBLIC SPEAKER

There are really only two steps the individual with "butterflies" needs to take in his approach toward his goal of becoming a public speaker:

- 1) Build up his self-confidence
- 2) Take an organized training course in public speaking

1) BUILDING SELF-CONFIDENCE:

This will require some soul searching. An individual must ask himself, quite frankly, what is causing him to flinch before the challenge of speaking before a group of his peers.

Maybe the causes spring from conditioned reflexes acquired in childhood or early youth.

As a child he may have become conditioned to holding his tongue by the constant admonishment that "children should be seen and not heard."

Or maybe in early youth his ideas were always scoffed at by some know-it-all who conditioned him into believing that anything he had to say was not worth listening to.

Or at school someone may have laughed when he stood up to speak and this silenced him forevermore.

Possibly a speech impediment causes him to be sensitive of speaking before others.

Any one of these—or a number of other causes—may be robbing him of the confidence he needs to make him feel equal to others.

Whatever this individual discovers his particular bugaboo to be he should rout it out, face up to it, and exterminate it once and for all.

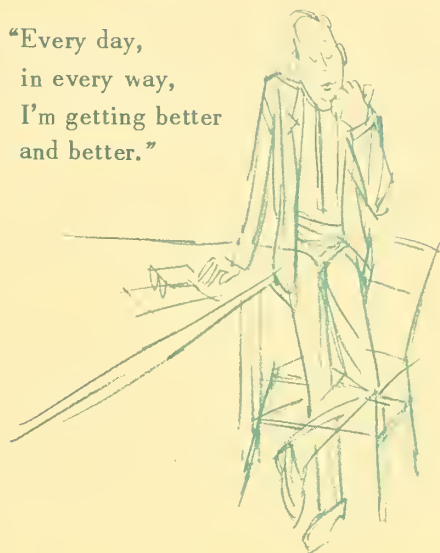
Such a man needs constantly to remind himself of Abraham Lincoln's famous words:

"All men are created equal."

Why, therefore, should he feel unequal to anyone? He might find additional therapeutic value in the practice recommended years ago by the now forgotten

Dr. Emile Coué and repeat over and over again to himself:

"Every day,
in every way,
I'm getting better
and better."



This first step is very important. The individual has to accomplish it before he will ever have the courage to take the second step.

2) ORGANIZED TRAINING COURSE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING:

Two avenues of approach are open to the individual seeking organized training in public speaking:

a) He or she can register for a class in public speaking. These are offered at most of the universities in any community. There are also schools or "Y" classes devoted solely to the teaching of this particular subject.

Classes meet usually once a week. Their fees vary. Some of them focus their attention entirely on the techniques of speechmaking itself.

However, some of these schools and classes have, in addition, formed "alumni" clubs for their graduates. Their purpose is to afford an opportunity to continue the practice of the techniques of speechmaking learned in the classroom. They also offer a chance for learning Conference Leadership, Officer Training, and how to serve as a committee chairman.

They hold dinner and banquet meetings at which members take their turn in giving the invocation, presenting guests, introducing the featured speaker, and serving as emcee or toastmaster.

b) He or she can join one of the many Toastmaster or Toastmistress Clubs in existence all over the country. Membership is open to any adult of good

character and repute. The membership dues are nominal.

These clubs meet usually twice a month. Members learn by doing. Not only do they learn the techniques of speechmaking; at the same time they participate in all of the activities outlined in alumni clubs mentioned in (a) above.

In both clubs and classes the usages of parliamentary law and the observance of protocol are also a part of an individual's training.

Anyone at a loss to know how to go about effecting membership in either (a) or (b) above should write to the Office of Personnel and ask for this information. Those in Washington, D.C. may either call the Office of Personnel Director Carl Barnes on X-3585, or OP's Employee Development Division on X-3185 or X-3641. They will be glad to help.

RECOMMENDATION:

To the individual suffering from "butterflies" we strongly recommend following the advice of Thomas Bailey Alrich who said:

"They fail, and they alone, who have not striven."

Make the momentous decision.

- 1) Bolster up the self-confidence
- 2) Sign up for a public speaking class or club.

Then just as soon as some of the training of whichever you choose—club or class—begins to rub off on you, start taking advantage of every opportunity that comes your way to speak in public. Never say "no" when asked to do so. Practice, practice, practice! You'll find each speech will make you surer of the next one. That speaking in public can be a very rewarding experience.

SIDE EFFECTS:

You will find that your training in public speaking can have very salutary side effects.

You will learn—perhaps for the first time—how to research material for a speech, and in putting your material together you may find you have the potential for developing into a very capable writer.

In seeking subjects for your class or club talks you will find you'll learn many new things. Your intellectual horizon will push itself way out.

You will make new contacts. You will be sought after to take on new and interesting projects.



Your circle of friends will grow. You will be exposed to the impact of new and, very often, dynamic personalities.

NET RESULTS:

But—most of all—you will gain stature as a person. You will contribute to your own self-development. You will earn a new respect from others and in your own eyes.

Through the confidence developed under step 1) and reinforced by the training it gave you the courage to take under Step 2), you will find that the two words "Public Speaking" will cease to be anathema to you. That the bugaboos which plagued you in the past and caused those maddening "butterflies" have vanished, taking the "butterflies" with them.

And last—but not least—you may find that the next time some official is looking for an up-and-coming individual, with the ability to speak his piece, you could be the very one he is looking for!!!

IN PASSING.....

In focusing attention thus far on the "butterflies" sufferers, it is not to be assumed that interest is lacking in those not so afflicted who yet are interested in becoming public speakers. No slight is intended. They likewise are urged to join either a public speaking class or club, but immediately!

But a plea of guilty is entered for failure to mention, in passing, still another group of individuals. These are those who already consider themselves to be quite competent public speakers but whose performance often violates the techniques of public speaking.

Each individual whose activities require the making of speeches should take a personal inventory. If he finds he falls in this latter group, a refresher course in public speaking techniques might be in order.

IN ANTICIPATION.....

In the meantime mention might be made of a few bits of information on the techniques of public speaking for those who might be interested.

These "bits" are intended to give some idea of what may be anticipated through membership in either a public speaking class or club.

PUBLIC SPEAKING TECHNIQUES

VOICE:

Speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard by every member of your audience—whether with or without a mike.

Speak at a moderate rate of speed. Enunciate each word carefully—don't slur words together.

If you have a speech impediment, remember Demosthenes did too. Plutarch tells us:

"Demosthenes overcame and rendered more distinct his inarticulate and stammering pronunciation by speaking with pebbles in his mouth."



Follow his example but if possible by some other means than pebbles.

Many speakers fall into the habit of "urging" their way through a speech. These "urs" occur when the mental processes fail to keep up with the velocity of the tongue.

Oliver Wendell Holmes advised:

"And when you stick on conversation's burs, Don't strew your pathway with these dreadful urs."

Watch carefully for these "urs" and consciously try to eliminate them from your speech.

If your voice is not mellifluous (look it up) in tone, do your best to make it so. Practice speaking aloud in the privacy of your home. A tape recorder would be a worthwhile investment. Playbacks of your voice recordings will enable you to detect its flaws and work toward improving them.

POSTURE:

Good posture before an audience is a must. Stand upright. Let your hands hang naturally at your sides or alternately rest them on the lectern in readiness for gestures. Keep them empty of eyeglasses, pen or pencil, books, magazines, papers, cards, or anything of any kind.

If these—any of them—are essential to your speaking needs, see in advance that a support of some kind is provided for them. But then don't hang onto the support or to a chair, table, etc.

Ladies should not fiddle with their heads, pat their hair, place hands on hips, hug elbows, or fuss with their garments.

Nor should men jingle keys or small change in their pockets—their hands should not be in their pockets in the first place. This is a very unflattering pose.

If you customarily wear spectacles, don't keep fingering them.

All of these and numerous similar others are nervous habits and should be avoided. They are disturbing to your audience and can distract them from what you are saying.

EYE CONTACT:

Maintain good eye contact with your audience. Take everyone in, don't settle on one individual, the wall, ceiling, floor or speaking stand. Be impartial.

If you read your speech, be sure to look up frequently at your audience so they'll know you haven't forgotten them. If you use cue cards, make them as inconspicuous as possible. Make your audience feel you are talking with them—not at them.

GESTURES:

Use gestures. They add interest. The importance of empty hands hanging at sides, previously mentioned under "posture," is so they may be free to use

for gestures when the appropriate moment arrives.

Don't flail your hands or arms all over the place like a windmill. Use them for gestures but make the gestures pertinent to your remarks.



Don't try to make yourself use artificial gestures and don't try to imitate the gestures of others. Let them come naturally—they soon distinguish you for their particular style.

President Kennedy uses a chopping style with his hands. These gestures have come to be known as peculiarly his. In a picture showing only his hands in action their style of gesture would immediately identify the President to you.

THE SPEECH:

In a formal meeting, never forget to address your presiding officer and your audience, plus any guests present—observing proper protocol—before you begin your speech. This is a courtesy you owe them.

Open your speech with an attention-getter. It may be a funny story, a startling statement, or an appropriate quotation related to the speech or situation.

In your opening, try to establish rapport with your audience. Often a complimentary statement about your audience will put them right in the palm of your hand. But it must be sincere. You can't fool an audience. They can tell if you're "laying it on." That's a sure way to lose them.

Never open your speech with an apology. If you have the jitters or feel unprepared keep it to yourself. Your audience shouldn't be called on to make allowances for you. They have the right to expect your very best.

Be sure the body of your talk—your subject—is appropriate to the interests and concerns of your audi-

ence. Appropriate, that is, in intellectual level and subject matter.

Don't talk to a group of career women, for instance, on the subject of "Woman's Place Is in the Home." Or discourse to a class of 6th graders on "The Mysteries of Astrophysics."

Determine in advance the type of speech you plan to make. Is it:

- To inform
- To persuade toward a cause
- To sell an idea or a project
- To excite to action
- To entertain
- To bestow a gift or an award
- To eulogize
- Etc.

Then match your mood accordingly.

Have a good conclusion ready to get you off the podium. This is very important. Without one, you will flounder helplessly and sit down leaving yourself and audience in a state of suspended animation and embarrassment.

In other words

- Have something to get you on
- Have something to get you off
- and
- Have a well-developed in-between

In this connection, while it is well to more or less memorize your beginning and ending, never memorize



the body of your speech. This is a very dangerous thing to do. It will sound exactly like what it will be—a recitation. And, more important, if you forget one line you're absolutely stymied.

CAUTIONS:

There are several cautions every speechmaker should keep everlastingly in mind.

These are:

No one should ever attempt to make a speech on a subject on which he is not knowledgeable.

Lack of knowledge can, by itself, rob a speaker of confidence. It has been recommended that a speaker have 40% more material or information in his head on his subject than he will need to use for his speech.

This doesn't mean he should become a bore and inflict this additional 40% on his listeners. It should serve merely as a confidence-builder and leave his audience with the feeling that "this man knows what he's talking about."

Always be sure of your facts.
To Quote Adlai Stevenson:

"Man does not live by words alone, despite the fact that sometimes he has to eat them."

Be sure your words utter only facts you are sure about.

Never let any words you utter be offensive to your audience as a whole or to any single individual in it.

"But words once spoke can never be recalled," Wentworth Dillon said.

Not only can offending words never be recalled. Much worse, they are never forgotten. Ironically, you will be forever remembered and identified by your offending words—not your good ones.

CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP:

On a presiding officer of any meeting rests the responsibility for its success or failure.

Whether the meeting is formal or informal, large or small, he sets the tone and pace.

He must keep the meeting in order, see that it accomplishes its purpose, and terminates within its allotted time.

In so doing, he must heed protocol and be guided by parliamentary procedure.

He would be well advised to have a well-planned agenda and see that it is followed.

A loosely run meeting, dominated by a few, is the fault of a weak presiding officer. Confusion and dissatisfaction are its chief results.

In small group meetings—and at staff meetings—less formality prevails.

While formal address to the chair and the group is usually dispensed with, virtually all other techniques mentioned under the heading "Public Speaking Techniques" would nevertheless still apply.

At such meetings, the chairman usually calls upon individuals for extemporaneous or impromptu reports on their activities or on a particular project.

Knowing in advance they will likely be called upon, these individuals should come to the meeting well prepared.

Such reports should be prefaced with some explanatory remarks to fill in the group on what has gone before. The chairman may know—from previous private discussions with the individual involved—but the group may not. It would help them to know what is being talked about.

If many individual reports are to be given, and time is limited, each person should try to keep his report brief and give the other fellow a chance likewise. It is incumbent on the chairman to see that this courtesy is observed.

The chairman should be sure that not only he, himself, understands everything each speaker is talking about but that everyone present does also. He should ask speakers to spell out difficult names and give identities of individuals or groups mentioned.

When the speaker is vague and obscure on points, issues or subject matter under discussion, the chairman must insist these be clarified. This is necessary not only for his own benefit but for that of the listeners as well. Only then may they intelligently express their views and opinions which is a privilege the chairman owes them.

OFFICER TRAINING:

Officer training is provided through actual practical experience in both the alumni clubs and the Toastmaster and Toastmistress clubs.



Individuals take turns serving as President, Vice President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and, in the case of the TM Clubs, as Club Representative.

Terms of office in some clubs run for a 6-months' period; in others, for a year. Individuals are elected to these offices as they progress in experience and develop capability.

Service in these offices develops the individual's potential for leadership. It helps round out his abilities as a public speaker, and widens his field for achievement.

COMMITTEE EXPERIENCE:

Prior to experience as an officer, individuals gain experience serving as members of committees or as committee chairmen.

These committees cover a wide range of activity: Membership, Hospitality, Housing, Program, Public

Relations, Budget, Ways & Means, etc. These are the Standing Committees. Experience is also gained on ad hoc committees.

PARLIAMENTARY LAW:

Individuals likewise serve as club parliamentarian. Close adherence to parliamentary law is observed in the clubs, affording individuals an opportunity for actual practice.

MISCELLANEA:

Practice is had in:

- Giving an invocation
- Giving the welcome
- Introducing guests
- Serving as toastmaster
- Serving as topicmaster or topicmistress
- Serving as host or hostess
- Observing the intricacies of protocol

IN CONCLUSION

Here are some lines written by David Everett (1770-1813) for a 7-year old schoolboy, Ephraim H. Farrar of New Ipswich, New Hampshire, for a school declamation:

"You'd scarce expect one of my age
To speak in public on the stage;
And if I chance to fall below
Demosthenes or Cicero,
Don't view me with a critic's eye,
But pass my imperfections by.
Large streams from little fountains flow,
Tall oaks from little acorns grow."

After you have registered for your class in public speaking or have joined a public speaking club you might very well adapt those lines to yourself.

YOURS FOR SUCCESS IN YOUR PUBLIC SPEAKING